LIBERTY INDUSTRIAL FINISHING

NEW YORK

EPA ID# NYD000337295

EPA REGION 2
CONGRESSIONAL DIST. 03
Nassau County
Farmingdale

Site Description

Liberty Industrial Finishing (Liberty) site covers approximately 30 acres of land in a former industrial park. The property is generally bordered on the north by railroad tracks, on the east by Main Street, on the west by Ellsworth-Allen Park, and the south by Motor Avenue. Since the late 1930's, industrial operations at the site have included the manufacture of aircraft parts and trailers, and metal plating and finishing operations, including anodizing, electroplating, dying, and painting. Numerous industrial and light industrial businesses have leased and continue to lease space at the site. The waste disposal basins, northwest disposal area and Building B basement are the major areas of contamination. In 1977, New York State found Liberty in violation of the wastewater discharge limits of its permit. Liberty was ordered to clean up the site in 1978, but did not comply. In 1984, Four J's Company acquired title to the entire Liberty property. Approximately 20,200 people live within 1 mile of the site. About 90,000 people draw drinking water from wells within 3 miles of the site. The site is located approximately 1 mile south of the Bethpage State Park; Massapequa Creek is half a mile south of the site and is used for recreational activities.

Site Responsibility: This site is being addressed through Federal, State, and potentially responsible party (PRP) actions.

NPL LISTING HISTORY
Proposed Date: 10/15/84
Final Date: 06/10/86

Threats and Contaminants

Groundwater and soils are contaminated with heavy metals including cadmium and chromium and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) such as dichloroethene, trichloroethene, and tetrachloroethene. There are no private drinking wells in the vicinity of the site. People living near the site obtain their drinking water from local water utilities; the water utilities routinely test their supplies to ensure compliance with State and federal drinking water standards.

Risk characterizations conducted as part of EPA's initial remedial investigation (RI) and supplemental RI concluded that the site does not pose current-use risk to site workers, nearby residents and those who frequent Ellsworth Allen Park and Massapequa Creek. It should be noted, however, that the risk characterizations did indicate that certain parties could be at risk under different exposure scenarios that could exist in the future (e.g., commercial/industrial, recreational, and construction) or for anyone that might install a well at the site and use it as a potable water supply. Threats posed by elevated concentrations of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in soils adjacent to current and former electrical transformers were eliminated in the Spring of 1996 through a removal action described below.

Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in two stages: immediate actions and a long-term remedial phase focusing on cleanup of the entire site.

Response Action Status

Immediate Actions: Several cleanup efforts have been undertaken by the site owners and operators. Unknown amounts of contaminated soil and sludge were removed from the basins in 1978 and 1987. Another cleanup occurred in 1980 following a fire in one of the tenant facilities.

A removal site evaluation (RSE) completed by the EPA in February 1994 indicated that PCB-contaminated soils should be subject to an immediate removal action. As a result of the RSE, in August 1994, the EPA signed an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with nine potentially responsible parties (PRPs) to undertake the removal action; EPA also issued a Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO) to six PRPs to perform the same cleanup activities and to participate and coordinate with the recipients of the AOC. The work, which was initiated in October 1994, included the sampling, analysis and removal and off-site disposal of PCB-contaminated soil and materials from electrical transformer areas, as well as the removal and off-site disposal of waste materials in abandoned drums and underground storage tanks.

Entire Site: The Four J's Company conducted a limited investigation to determine the extent of the contamination in some portions of the site pursuant to a 1984 State consent order. The study was deemed to be inadequate; at the State's request, EPA assumed the role of lead agency for the site and initiated an RI in August 1991 to define the nature and extent of contamination. The initial RI report was completed in January 1994. This initial RI report defined much

of the contamination at the site, such as in soils on the western portion of the property, in the extensive network of in-ground and below-ground features, and in the Upper Glacial (shallow) aquifer. However, because the Magothy (lower) aquifer, the Massapequa Creek, and the majority of the soils on the eastern portion of the property were not fully characterized during the initial RI, EPA determined a supplemental RI/FS should be conducted for these areas. This supplemental RI/FS was recently completed in April 2001 by several of the PRPs at the site.

Because community interest in the site has always been high, after EPA released the initial RI report, the Agency had extensive discussions with the community, local officials, and PRPs on future land use and preliminary remedial alternatives for the western site soils. After a consensus about the future land use could not be reached by the community, local officials and the PRPs, EPA decided that for the purposes of identifying appropriate remedial alternatives, the future land use would be commercial/industrial.

In July 1997, EPA released for public comment an FS report and a Proposed Plan for the remediation of the contaminated soils on the western portion of the site. In October 1997, after a careful evaluation of the public comments received on the July 1997 Proposed Plan, EPA announced its decision to postpone the selection of a remedy for the soils on the western portion of the Liberty site to allow time for the Agency to assess further the impact of the soil remedy on the scope and duration of the future groundwater remedy. EPA also announced its plans to conduct additional sampling of soils on the western portion of the site as part of the supplemental RI activities. By taking these measures, EPA would be better able to assess the impacts that various soils cleanup levels would have on the costs and time frame for the restoration of the contaminated groundwater, as well as evaluate the overall costs of cleaning up the site. Field work for these supplemental investigations was completed in the Spring of 2000. In September 1997, EPA announced that it would move forward with an expedited interim groundwater action to prevent the significantly-contaminated portion of the groundwater contaminant plume from continuing to migrate from the site. This interim groundwater action is being implemented by three PRPs under a Unilateral Administrative Order.

The supplemental RI/FS report which describes the nature and extent of contamination in site soils, groundwater, and contamination in pond sediments in Massapequa Creek downstream of the site, and an evaluation of alternatives for comprehensive site cleanup was released in April 2001. A Proposed Plan that outlined the Agency's preferred long-term comprehensive remedy was released in July 2001. EPA selected the long-term comprehensive site remedy in a March 2002 Record of Decision for the site, including excavation and off-site disposal of 73,100 cubic yards of contaminated soils, construction and operation of a conventional pump-and-treat system to address on-site and off-site groundwater, and excavation and off-site disposal of 2,600 cubic yards of contaminated pond sediments. As part of the soil remedial component of this comprehensive site remedy, nearly half of the site property, or 15 acres, will become suitable for the recreational uses being planned by the Town of Oyster Bay.

Site Facts: In September 1978, Liberty Industrial Finishing entered into a Consent Agreement with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to clean up the site. It failed to comply with the Agreement. Subsequently, in April 1985, NYSDEC issued a Consent Order to Four J's Company, then owner of the site, requiring it to conduct a study of site contamination. The Four J's Company's study plan was determined to be inadequate because it did not address all on- or off-site contamination. In March 1987, NYSDEC issued a second Order, this time to 55 Motor Avenue Co., which manages the site, to remove contaminated soils and sludges in disposal basins at the site. Under the second Order, contaminated soils and sludges were removed from the recharge basins, and other disposal areas at the site.

Cleanup Progress 

(Time Critical Removal Action Complete)

The removal and off-site disposal of PCB-contaminated soil and materials from electrical transformer areas, as well as the removal and off-site disposal of waste materials in abandoned drums and underground storage tanks has greatly reduced the threats to the public and the environment posed by the site. Materials removed from the site included approximately 15,500 gallons of oil/water/waste material from underground tanks, 9 drums of transformer oil, 5 transformer carcasses, 190 cubic yards of soil, 10 cubic yards of concrete and debris, and 40 drums of waste material. This work was completed in 1995.

(Cleanup Currently being Implemented)

On March 31, 1998, the EPA Regional Administrator authorized the implementation of the interim groundwater action. Pilot testing of various innovative, in-well circulation technologies for the interim action began in December of 1998 and was completed in May of 1999; results were used to design the full-scale interim groundwater treatment system. Construction of this innovative treatment system was completed in January 2001. Due to various operational difficulties, this treatment system is presently being converted into a conventional pump-and-treat system.